



Clay Community Health Happenings



Nancy J. Mills, Administrator

August 2012

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Clay County Health Department News

Say "Yes" to Healthy Start



A recent DOH Press Release announced the exciting news that "Florida's Infant Mortality Rate Reaches All Time Low."

The state of Florida's infant mortality rate has fallen to 6.4 deaths per 1000 live births, a historic low and down 33 percent from 1990 (Annual Bureau of Vital Statistics' report (2011)). Clay County's infant mortality rate of 4.8 deaths per 1000 live births is below the state rate. While the maternal child health community celebrates these landmarks we continue our daily efforts to bring these rates even lower.

Clay County Healthy Start is the program that is devoted to the prevention of infant mortality and the promotion of healthy infant development. This is accomplished through universal screening of ALL pregnant women and newborn infants and free, confidential, individualized support and education for those who will benefit most from the program.

The universal Healthy Start Risk Screen is a questionnaire that helps identify individuals at risk for an early delivery, developmental concerns or not surviving infancy. It also helps identify maternal and infant health and wellness trends in our community so efforts and resources can be focused on areas of greatest need. The questionnaire is offered to all pregnant women at their first obstetric appointment and the parents of every newborn infant at their birth facility.

If women say "yes" to complete the screen and "yes" to share their information they are helping all the women and children in our community. If they say "yes" and their provider says "yes" to refer them to Healthy Start then they are opening the door to a world of support and education to help them have a healthy full term pregnancy and a healthy infant. Just say **"YES"** to Healthy Start.

Health Department Teaches at the Florida Youth Challenge Academy

In collaboration with Volusia County Health Department (CHD) and Area HIV/AIDS program educators, Clay CHD disease prevention staff recently presented an

educational program to approximately 170 Florida Youth Challenge Academy (FLYCA) cadets at their campus located on Camp Blanding in Starke. The FLYCA program is geared toward Florida's 16 to 18 year old at-risk youth. You can learn more about the National Guard Youth Challenge Program at <http://www.ngycp.org/site/state/fl/>.

The cadets were given valuable information about healthy choices and behaviors, with an emphasis on disease prevention. There was a lively question and answer session following the presentation. The impact of social media on healthy lifestyles was also discussed.

Clay CHD is fortunate to have had this opportunity to deliver such important health messages to these teens. While they get the facts directly from professionals in Public Health, the experts gain knowledge about current social trends and the everyday experiences of our youth. This sharing of information enhances our public health disease prevention program, thereby enhancing the health of our entire community.

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Back to School Activities

To help prepare school health room nurses, aides and relief staff for the new school year, the Clay County Health Department (CCHD) School Health Team and the Clay County School District (CCSD) held their annual health services meeting on August 9, 2012. The meeting took place at the County Administration Building.

Approximately 65 CCSD employees, including registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, health aides and administrative personnel attended this important meeting. Agenda topics included: Medical Errors, Medicaid, 504 Training, Care Planning Meetings, Influenza-Like-Illnesses, Child Abuse and general School Health updates.

This training and information is vital for both new and returning health room nurses, aides and relief staff to help ensure the safety and wellness of all children attending Clay County schools.

The Bully Factor

Children across the state are back in school. Parents have prepared by purchasing new supplies and clothing. Some may have talked to their children about the importance of making good grades and staying out of trouble. But there is another

important subject to discuss that often gets overlooked: school bullying.

Bullying is defined as a time when one or more students tease, threaten, spread rumors about, hit, shove or hurt another student over and over again. Name calling because of weight, size, physical appearance, or because someone thinks they are gay, lesbian, or bisexual is also common. Bullying can happen in school or via social media. Victims sometimes lead isolated lives as a result.

One in four teenagers and 30% of grade-school age children are affected by bullying. The Florida Department of Health (DOH) and the Florida Department of Education (DOE) encourage parents to talk to their kids about bullying and take steps to prevent it from happening. Bullying, teasing, and harassment should not be considered normal rites of passage or "just kids being kids." If you feel that your child is being bullied, be sure to be supportive, gather information about the bullying, and contact your child's teacher and/or principal.

Aside from the psychological risks associated with bullying, those who are bullied are also more likely to engage in risky behavior. These behaviors put them and other students at higher risk for serious problems, injuries or even death. DOH's Florida Youth

Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), a school-based anonymous survey conducted in public high schools, highlights the prevalence of bullying and related risks.

The 2011 YRBS showed that, compared to their non-bullied peers, students who were bullied, teased or called names in the past 12 months were significantly more likely to have engaged or experienced certain behaviors or risk factors such as:

- Riding as a passenger in a vehicle with an inebriated driver
- Driving while intoxicated
- Engaging in physical fights
- Carrying a weapon
- Taking prescription drugs without a doctor's note
- Engaging in sex without a condom
- Seriously considering committing suicide
- Intentionally harming themselves
- Fasting 24 hours to lose or maintain weight

All of these behaviors increased by no less than 30 percent in bullied students. The highest increase of incidence and risk was 73% - in the very serious categories of thinking about suicide and harming themselves.

For more information please visit the DOE Bullying Prevention Page at:

<http://www.fldoe.org/safeschools/bullying.asp>



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